A U M

The silent worship of abstract or noumenal Nature is the one ennobling religion of humanity. —H. P. BLAVATSKY

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PARADOXES OF POLITICS

THE time has come, perhaps, for examining some of the apparent paradoxes relating to social issues in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, especially since modern history is gradually accomplishing a practical merger between social and philosophical questions. It may be well, at the outset, to consider what is "politics" and what is not.

In her first Message to the American Theosophists (1888), H.P.B. remarked that "we," speaking of Theosophists *as* Theosophists, "do not meddle in politics." She meant here, it seems clear, that students of Theosophy are careful not to involve the Theosophical Movement with their personal political opinions. There are two excellent reasons for this. First, the level of political attack on the problems of modern society usually neglects the real cause of the problems. Political methods, even when applied with the best of motives, aim at superficial changes, and, as H.P.B. observes in *The Key to Theosophy,* "To seek to achieve political reforms before we have effected a reform in *human nature, is like putting new wine into old bottles.*" There is the further fact that political leaders are often demagogues who declare for programs of human betterment only for the purpose of winning support for their candidacy. The programs may *sound* splendid, yet be quite unworkable and their proponents may know or suspect it, but nevertheless advocate them in order to ride into office on a wave of popular acclaim. If Theosophists were to endeavor to identify "Theosophical" elements in party programs, and then seek support among students for what they find, they would be in a position of exceeding vulnerability to self-deception, to say nothing of the danger of transferring to their

political beliefs something of the high faith they feel that Theosophy is indeed the truth and holds the answer to every question. For such, politics would then tend to become a matter of religious conviction, which would be bad for politics and worse for Theosophy. There have been those foolish enough to suppose they saw secret "adept" qualities in their political heroes, and found in this elating discovery a justification for abandoning every principle of wisdom and impartiality in relation to their fellows who remained unable to "see the light." Access to "wisdom of the ages," when turned to such purposes, can be worse than the darkest materialism.

The most categorical, perhaps, of H.P.B.'s statements in this respect is to be found at the end of her article, "What Are the Theosophists?", which appeared in the first volume of the *Theosophist,* and may be taken, therefore, as embodying basic definitions or statements of policy for future guidance. She there wrote:

> Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which it abhors—as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour; the Society cares but little about the outward management of the material world. The whole of its aspirations are directed towards the occult truths of the visible and invisible worlds. Whether the physical man be under the rule of an empire or a republic, concerns only the man of matter. His body may be enslaved; as to his soul, he has the right to give to his rulers the proud answer of Socrates to his judges. They have no sway over the *inner* man.

So now, it seems, we have the last word on "political" subjects. But have we? On the preceding page of the same article, she has this to say about the Theosophical Society:

> Born in the United States of America, the Society was constituted on the model of its Mother Land. The latter, omitting the name of God from its constitution lest it should afford a pretext one day to make a state religion, gives absolute equality to all religions in its laws. All support and each is in turn protected by the State. The Society, modelled upon this constitution, may fairly be termed a "Republic of Conscience."

Thus the free political atmosphere of the United States enjoyed some importance in the eyes of H.P.B., and was at least a factor in bringing the inauguration of the Theosophical Movement to the New World. The formation of the American Republic, which was in some sense a

political enterprise, held clear promise for the spread of Theosophy. This seems beyond debate. H.P.B., moreover, spoke of the United States as a "great country which I love for its noble freedom," and also in the first Message to the American Theosophists observed that the growth of the movement in the United States was "a sign that in things spiritual as well as things temporal the great American Republic is well fitted for independence and self-organization."

Plainly, the indifference of the student to whether he "be under the rule of an empire or a republic" is to be recognized as a final matter of inward attitude; the social forms of an epoch have obvious bearing on the opportunities which open to workers for the movement and are by no means unimportant.

Even in the question of "socialism," there are qualifications to be considered. After speaking of the acquisitiveness of American society, and the aggravations of competition and the struggle for existence, H.P.B. remarks in the third Message to the American Theosophists:

> Happily new tendencies are also springing up, working to change the basis of men's daily lives from selfishness to altruism. The Nationalist Movement is an application of Theosophy. But remember, all of you, that if Nationalism is an application of Theosophy, it is the latter which must ever stand first in your sight.

No one can ever convict H. P. Blavatsky of "weasel words" or of hedging. The Nationalist Movement was an expression of indigenous American socialism, according to the theories propounded by Edward Bellamy in his sociological utopian novel, *Looking Backwards.* Her approval of the ethical aspect of this movement is unequivocal, although she was careful not to advocate that theosophists turn all their energies in this direction. In *The Key to Theosophy,* she goes even further in respect to Bellamy:

> The organization of Society, depicted by Edward Bellamy, in his magnificent work *Looking Backwards,* admirably represents the Theosophical idea of what should be the first great step towards the full realization of universal brotherhood. The state of things he depicts falls short of perfection, because selfishness still exists and operates in the hearts of men. But in the main, selfishness and individualism have been overcome by the feeling of solidarity and mutual brotherhood; and the scheme of life there described reduces the causes tending to create and foster selfishness to a minimum.

Then, again in the *Key,* H.P.B. refers to the "Gospels" of both Buddha and Christ, saying: "Both reformers were ardent philanthropists and practical *altruists—preaching most unmistakably Socialism* of the noblest and highest type, self-sacrifice to the bitter end."

What is most obvious of all, from these various passages, is that no one can quote from H. P. Blavatsky to quickly settle any sort of "political" question or social issue. She made it impossible for any student to take her counsels seriously and at the same time to entertain rigid or doctrinaire ideas on any subject at all, least of all on social subjects. Rather, she endeavored to teach her students to view life *whole,* without dividing it up into separate areas of human enterprise. Since politics, as commonly undertaken, does precisely this, theosophists can not afford to waste their energies in this area. But the fact that she said what she did about Bellamy—that she even opened the pages of *Lucifer* to articles debating the merits of socialism—is clear evidence that she hoped that students would themselves *think* long and deeply about the implications of Theosophic principles in respect to social problems. One cannot, in other words, find in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky a Theosophical license to refuse to notice the problems of the world which burst upon us in political form. The political solutions proposed by men of the world may be full of folly, but the problems are real and bear deep meaning to those who have the sorrows and sufferings of mankind before them in their hearts. H.P.B. did not ignore such problems—no more than did Gautama Buddha in his time. She considers them with great depth in "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work," and again, from another point of view, in "The Fall of Ideals." The latter article contains a profound analysis of "Atheists, Nihilists, and Anarchists, men of the Terror," those whom we might term the Hitlers and Stalins of modern times, relating them to the matrix of acquisitiveness, hypocrisy, and selfishness in the society of the "Christian" nations.

The importance of the study of Theosophy for its "social" implications is not for the "political action" as "citizens" to which students may be led, but rather in the need for entering at least as philosophers into the deep conflicts and divisions of our time, and thinking them through to clear conceptions as to how knowledge of Karma and Reincarnation might bring a practical solution. If there is failure to attempt this, some students, at least, may find themselves holding their political opinions in isolation from philosophical thinking, as though the insist-

ence that theosophists do not meddle in politics were somehow a "permission" to remain narrowly partisan and unphilosophical in the region of political problems.

The Theosophical Movement seeks nothing less than the regeneration of mankind. It is not a ticket to salvation for those who embrace "the teachings." It affords a perspective, a way to recognizing that spirit or attitude of mind by means of which the *entirety of living* may be reoriented and reorganized around a few basic principles. If portions of our personal views are unpenetrated by these principles, or if some region of human experience is ignored as "unimportant," then all these things will some day loom as "shadows of ourselves outside the Path," and remain as barriers to the full understanding of our fellows, perchance our fellow-students as well.

What H. P. Blavatsky conceived to be the role of theosophists in relation to social reform is set forth in a short section of *The Key to Theosophy* (pp. 231-37), where she gives recognition to the importance of *environment* in the shaping of human character, and speaks of the duty of the theosophist in "forming public opinion" in the support of wise social efforts. The criterion of "wise" is given by the question: "Will the proposed action tend to promote that true brotherhood which it is the aim of Theosophy to bring about?" She says further that the desirable public opinion is to be obtained by "inculcating those high and nobler conceptions of public and private duties which lie at the root of all spiritual and material improvement."

Scarcely any reflection is needed for it to be apparent that conventional party loyalties will hold small interest for a serious student of Theosophy and the example set by H.P.B. The forms of social action which a theosophist adopts will almost of necessity be forged by himself as pioneering endeavors to accomplish the things H.P.B. spoke of. Like her, the student will be willing to admire genuine humanitarian ideals wherever he finds them, and he will take to heart the injunction of the *Key:*

> Every Theosophist, therefore, is bound to do his utmost to help on, by every means in his power, every wise and well-considered social effort which has for its object the amelioration of the condition of the poor. Such effort should be made with a view to their ultimate social emancipation, or the development of the sense of duty in those who now so often neglect it in nearly every relation of life.

What are the "well-considered social efforts" of today? Can we find any "Bellamys" about to encourage? Not, we can be sure, by using nineteenth-century yardsticks. Social thinking, once clearly defined by men like Bellamy and others, is today in almost unrelieved confusion. There are no social gospels bearing the inspiration of fresh discovery. The importance of this, for the student, may be in the opportunity to wonder why, and possibly to discover some tentative answers. The chief characteristic of our time, socially speaking, is found in the disintegration of familiar forms, the waning of popular faiths, and the disillusionment of both the intellectual classes and the "masses." It is a time, therefore, of the loosening of convictions, of flux in opinion, and indecision in policy. *Transition* is truly the word for our epoch. There may emerge, in the course of years or decades, a synthesis of social thinking which will have the virtues for our time that Bellamy's thinking had in 1888. The point is, *this thinking may be very different in form from Bellamy's.* How shall we recognize it, supposing, for discussion's sake, that something like this *does* emerge?

We shall recognize it by the same means that we use to recognize any other fresh application of Theosophical principles—out of the practice we have in thinking about the world and its problems in Theosophical terms. For, quite likely, the generation immediately ahead will encounter nothing so comprehensive as Bellamy's plan. There may be only *currents* of social thinking which are obscurely keyed to Theosophical purposes, never to be drawn into the Theosophic scheme in the form in which they appear. No questions of this sort can be decided beforehand. The invitation of Theosophy is never to adopt the right opinions, to choose the correct platform or "side," but rather to learn to think fearlessly and impartially for ourselves, and to think most of all about the things concerning which we are most uncertain, for there lies our weakness and our vulnerability. If the hope of the world lies in self-knowledge, and if the development of intuition, self-reliance, and a sense of responsibility are the prime purposes of the Theosophical Movement, then we soon see that it is the dynamics of the Theosophic life which will accomplish these purposes, and not a faithful adherence to doctrine or organization. In the words of H.P.B., "the recognition of pure Theosophy—the philosophy of the rational explanation of things and not tenets—is of the most vital importance, as it alone can furnish the beacon-light needed to guide humanity on its true path."

WORD PUZZLES

SO far as we recall, every revered teacher and sage has found it necessary, in his time, to lay bare the characteristic psychological weaknesses of the day. Though the teachings of the Buddha were essentially affirmative, it was yet unavoidable that their presentation would expose, by implication, the inadequacies of religious orthodoxy, and challenge, however "non-violently," Brahmin authority. Jesus, from the standpoint of the orthodox, was an upstart and a rebel, who likewise called attention to misuse of authority.

So with Madame Blavatsky. Her utterances were particularly fiery in denunciation of hypocrisy and pretentiousness in her time, a combination suggested by the word *cant.* One might almost think that H.P.B. was preoccupied with this term, so often does it occur in her articles and in her *Key to Theosophy*—especially in all she wrote near the end of her life, after many years of experience in trying to "break the molds of men's minds."

Cant and *hypocrisy,* however, while often used as if synonymous, are not quite the same thing. By derivation *cant* has to do, first, with the preservation of ritualistic forms by incantation. Full-blown hypocrisy does often follow in the wake of *cant,* however, since the meaningless repetition of doctrine develops pretentiousness, a mistaken belief that one is possessed of special knowledge because he is able to pronounce properly certain terms. *Webster's New Collegiate* gives something of the story in the following definitions:

> *cant* n. [Prob. fr. ONF. *cant* (F. *chant*) *singing*] 1. An affected, singsong mode of speaking; a whine. 2. The expressions peculiar to, and generally understood only by, members of a particular sect, class, or occupation. . . . 3. A mode of talking used merely out of convention; esp., the insincere use of phraseology.

The "posing" aspect of *cant* is further illuminated by Joseph Shipley, who finds an analogy with "the whining plea of the beggar, who indeed sometimes posed as a pilgrim—much as young men sell subscriptions 'to pay their way through college'."

Thus, whenever men have paraded the appearance of virtue in order to gain respect or reward they have "canted." *Cant* is, then, a special way of arriving at hypocrisy, rather than the condition of hypocrisy it-

self. *Cant* is also a species of pride, or rather an alliance between simple egocentricity and a feeling of status or privilege growing out of one's apparently close association with virtuous people and groups. H.P.B. once wrote that "pride is the first enemy to itself, unwilling to have anyone praised in its presence, it falls foul of every rival and does not always come out victorious." So with *cant,* for it is the immediate Karma of the canting hypocrite to multiply the existence of rivals with every day. In the midst of this plenitude of rivalry, no one can "come out victorious" consistently.

H.P.B.'s emphasis upon the prime duty of theosophists to track to its lair this foe of the higher self is expressed succinctly in the *Key to Theosophy* (p. 48). She writes:

> Our duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. To oppose and counteract—after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature—bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in miracles or anything supernatural.

The implication here is that the spiritual intuition, upon which the man's philosophizing powers depend, is completely—if only temporarily—stultified by empty ritualism, by prideful associations, in the context of which one deludes himself into believing that he is one of the "especially chosen." In an article appearing in the *Theosophist* for May, 1883, H.P.B. comments on the evident sense of self-satisfaction which an English correspondent displayed in contrasting English "freedom" with the despotic censorship prevalent in Russia at that time. Here she implies that open authoritarianism is less confusing than a "tyranny of the consensus"—the demand for conformity of opinion which arises from that complexity of compromises we call "conventionality." Here she wrote:

> We prefer brutal sincerity and a frank avowal of despotism to sham protestations of liberty, and—pharisaism. We would a thousand times rather submit to the iron-bound limitations of the Russian press-laws, of censorship, and an honestly open system of autocratism, than risk to trust to the treacherous promises of the deceptive *fata morgana* of English social and religious liberty, as exercised at present.
>
> Freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and along with it social freedom, are simply delusions like all the rest; the will-o-the-wisps, the pit-falls prepared by the old generations to ensnare the new ones, the credulous and the innocent. "So far shalt thou go and no further!"

> says the terrible but honest genius of the Russian Press, pointing out with his finger to the boundaries prescribed by censorship; while the Englishman who sings so proudly. . . .
>
> "Britannia rules the waves,
> The Britons never ne—ver, n-e-e-ve-er, will be slaves!"
>
> —finds himself before he has hardly time to draw the last note, in the tight embrace of Public Opinion, the boa-constrictor-like Mrs. Grundy; who, after squeezing the breath out of him, coolly throws him right into the clutches of some other such "Trinity of Righteousness."

Again, in another section of the *Key,* H.P.B. further excoriates English habitudes of mind, recognizing that, precisely because the English had the best apparent grounds for intellectual pride, so was the danger of practicing *cant* the greatest:

> The profession of a truth is not yet the enactment of it; and the more beautiful and grand it sounds, the more loudly virtue or duty is talked about instead of being acted upon, the more forcibly it will always remind one of the Dead Sea fruit. *Cant* is the most loathsome of all vices; and *cant* is the most prominent feature of the greatest Protestant country of this century—England.

By all these observations, the student is led to reflect, much in the manner of the modern psychiatrist, upon the nature of the person who possesses genuine mental health, in contrast to the wide range of common mental and psychic unbalances. Honesty is seen not as a mere personal virtue, but the only bedrock upon which a healthy society can be formed. For the presence of *cant* corrupts both religion and politics and, as H.P.B. indicated, can easily also corrupt the perspectives of nominal Theosophists. Those who became prideful of their familiarity with Sanskrit nomenclature, or with the details of ancient lore presented in Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* and *Secret Doctrine,* found it all too easy to pose as the possessors of a noble wisdom—when all they really possessed was the capacity to *chant* its phraseology. We see here an all-sufficient reason for the grounding of the T.S. upon its cosmopolitan base, the prime heresy of the Society being any campaign to advance one's own particular beliefs at the expense of others—in other words, the attempt to establish an orthodoxy of which one could then be the awe-inspiring custodian.

Teachers of religious and philosophical truths, especially when committed to setting these in written form, thus run a staggering risk. Who-

ever reads their presentations of "doctrines" is thereby able to misuse them, by claiming a specially derived ability to represent them correctly to others. In this context we can see the profound logic of H.P.B.'s frequent remarks to the effect that "frank materialists" were far better for the Society than those members who had a penchant for believing themselves among the especial elect. The materialist, at least, realized that his own opinions must stand their ground on an open field against all comers; those of sectarian leanings felt that the battle for truth had already been won, and themselves declared victorious by higher authority. Thus were the names of H.P.B. and her Adept teachers misused, politicalized, and made to serve ignoble ends. Therefore H. P. Blavatsky's definition of a *genuine* theosophist describes one who has "an inspiration of his own to solve the universal problems," and who, in the arena of debate and opinion, recognizes that truths new to him may be found in any one of a thousand unlikely places. One may learn, she said, even from those whose conclusions seem diametrically opposed to the tenor of one's own beliefs and, further, that others may benefit from the very philosophy which seems, to many students, adverse.

This is true *catholicity,* in Webster's sense of "comprehensive sympathies and understanding, liberal." But note what has happened to the word Catholic. Exactly the same thing, we see, that happened to the meaning of "incantation." As priests and self-styled representatives of the "one true Christianity" claimed to be the only rightful historical heirs of the teachings of Jesus, they gravitated towards totalitarianism, and thus inclined also toward the doctrine of apostolic succession. In this sense the Anglican Church was but a rival Catholicism, also claiming a direct descent from God and the son of God. Catholicism itself finally became a rigid *system,* thus effectively reversing the original meaning.

We may conclude, then, that whenever a man is inclined to "chant," to repeat in exactly the same way, a form in which philosophic ideas have been clothed, without thinking them through independently, he is making the duty of all Theosophists harder to fulfill. If he contends, perchance, that Theosophy, *as he understands it,* is the "whole truth," with all other conceptions representing but degrees of error, he has lost the breadth of spirit which characterized H.P.B.'s "Theosophical Movement." This, clearly, is an important phase of the story of the failure of the Theosophists of the last century; Theosophic intent may

be similarly obscured in our own time by any who claim virtue because they supposedly possess esoteric knowledge. For such an attitude renders one insensitive to the spirit of philosophy.

Having noted all these discouraging things about the danger of *cant,* we can turn, finally, to another word of opposite psychological orientation among the "C's"—compassion. When one's mind is in the state of *cant* it is fixed upon self, and is unresponsive to the thoughts, aspirations, and needs of other people. The man who "cants," further, is apt to become a *cynic,* whereas the man of compassion is not interested in measuring his supposed superior status against the inferior status of others, and instead examines sympathetically other beliefs and modes of conduct. The Buddhas and Christs "of compassion" were men who, somewhere along the lonely trails of soul, had learned to despise *cant*—within themselves first of all—and therefore developed that precious sort of integrity which banishes forever the thought of rivalry and spiritual status. Not once did either Buddha or Christ speak of *their* virtues, but instead declared the capacity of each individual to arrive at virtue in his own way, and in his own karmic time.

Avoidance of Delusion

I ask for no more than your conclusions on the great matters of human life and destiny. Let me know them, and I shall not trouble you to set out the arguments. I can myself supply them. Our desires attract supporting reasons as a magnet the iron filings. You will say, 'Then you are yourself prejudiced.' I fear most certainly. Yet there is a limit. We shall none of us be easily persuaded that we can believe the outrageously absurd because it takes our fancy. We must endeavour to proceed warily, and with what detachment we can muster. We should aim, I venture to think, now and always, at a conclusion, if such there be, which will satisfy the whole of our nature. And for two reasons. It is neither sensible nor scientific to take a part for the whole. 'The nature of man is his whole nature,' said Pascal. I accept that position.

—W. Macneile Dixon

ON PSEUDO-THEOSOPHY

"The more honesty a man has, the less he affects the air of a saint. The affectation of sanctity is a blotch on the face of devotion."

—LAVATER

"The most difficult thing in life is to know yourself." —THALES

SHALL WE WINNOW THE CORN, BUT FEED UPON THE CHAFF?

THE presiding genius in the *Daily News* Office runs amuck at *Lucifer* in his issue of February 16th. He makes merry over the presumed distress of some theosophists who see in our serial novel, "The Talking Image of Urur"—by our colleague, Dr. F. Hartmann—an attempt to poke fun at the Theosophical Society. Thereupon, the witty editor quizzes "Madame Blavatsky" for observing that she "does not agree with the view" taken by some pessimists; and ends by expressing fear that "the misgivings that have been awakened will not easily be laid to rest."

Ride, si sapis. It is precisely because it is our desire that the "misgivings" awakened should reach those in whom the sense of *personality* and *conceit* has not yet entirely stifled their better feelings, and force them to recognize themselves in the mirror offered to them in the "Talking Image," that we publish the "satirical" novel.

This proceeding of ours—rather unusual, to be sure, for editors—to publish a satire, which *seems* to the short-sighted to be aimed at their gods and parties only because they are unable to sense the underlying philosophy and moral in them, has created quite a stir in the dailies.

The various Metropolitan Press Cutting Agencies are pouring every morning on our breakfast-table their load of criticism, advice, and comment upon the rather novel policy. So, for instance, a kindly-disposed correspondent of the *Lancashire Evening Post* (February 18) writes as follows:—

> The editor of *Lucifer* has done a bold thing. She is publishing a story called "The Talking Image of Urur," which is designed to satirise the false prophets of Theosophy in order that the true prophets may be justified. I appreciate the motive entirely, but, unfortunately,

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NOTE.—This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for March, 1889, and has been twice reprinted in THEOSOPHY—in Vol. 3 and Vol. 14.

there are weak-minded theosophists who can see nothing in Dr. Hartmann's spirited tale but a caricature of their whole belief. So they have remonstrated with Madame Blavatsky, and she replies in *Lucifer* that "the story casts more just ridicule upon the enemies and detractors of the Theosophic Society than upon the few theosophists whose enthusiasm may have carried them into extremes." Unfortunately, this is not strictly accurate. The hero of the tale, a certain Pancho, is one of these enthusiasts, and it is upon him and upon the mock "adepts" who deceive him that the ridicule is thrown. But it never seems to have occurred to Madame Blavatsky and Dr. Hartmann that the moment you begin to ridicule one element, even though it be a false element, in the faith, you are apt to shake the confidence of many if not most believers, for the simple reason that they have no sense of humour. The high priestess of the cult may have this sense for obvious reasons,* but her disciples are likely to be lost if they begin to laugh, and if they can't laugh they will be bewildered and indignant. I offer this explanation with all humility to Madame Blavatsky, who has had some experience of the effects of satire.

The more so as, according to those members of the T.S. who have read the whole story, it is precisely "Madame Blavatsky" against whom its *satire* is the most directed. And if "Mme. Blavatsky"—presumably "the Talking Image"—does not object to finding herself represented as a kind of *mediumistic* poll parrot, why should other "theosophists" object? A theosophist above all men ought ever to bear in mind the advice of Epictetus: "If evil be said of thee, *and if it be true,* correct thyself; if it be a lie, *laugh at it.*" We welcome a *witty* satire always, and defy ridicule or any efforts in this direction to kill the Theosophical Society, so long as it, *as a body,* remains true to its *original* principles.

As to the other dangers so kindly urged by the *Post,* the "high priestess" acknowledges the benevolent objections by answering and giving her reasons, which are these: The chosen motto of the Theosophical Society has been for years—"There is no religion *higher than truth*"; the object of *Lucifer* is in the epigraph on its cover, which is "to bring to light the hidden things of darkness." If the editor of *Lucifer* and the Theosophists would not belie these two propositions and be true to their colours, they have to deal with perfect impartiality, sparing no more themselves than outsiders, or even their enemies. As to the "weak-

* The "obvious reasons" so delicately worded are these: "the high priestess of the cult" is almost universally supposed, outside of the T.S., to have exercised her own satirical powers and "sense of humour" on her *alleged* and numerous victims by *bamboozling* them into a belief *of her own invention.* So be it. The tree is known by its fruits, and it is posterity which will have to decide on the nature of the fruit.—(Ed.)

minded theosophists"—if any—they can take care of themselves in the way they please. If the "false prophets of Theosophy" are to be left untouched, the *true* prophets will be very soon—as they have already been—confused with the false. It is nigh time to winnow our corn and cast away the chaff. The T.S. is becoming enormous in its numbers, and if the *false* prophets, the pretenders (*e.g.,* the "H. B. of L." exposed in Yorkshire by Theosophists two years ago, and the "G. N. K. R." just exposed in America), or even the weak-minded dupes, are left alone, then the Society threatens to become very soon a fanatical body split into three hundred sects—like Protestantism—each hating the other, and all bent on destroying the truth by monstrous exaggerations and idiotic schemes and shams. We do not believe in allowing the presence of *sham* elements in Theosophy, because of the fear, forsooth, that if even "a false element in the faith" is *ridiculed,* the latter "is apt to shake the confidence" in the whole. At this rate Christianity would be the first to die out centuries ago under the sledge-hammer blows dealt to its various churches by its many reformers. No philosopher, no mystic or student of symbolism, can ever laugh at or disbelieve in the sublime allegory and conception of the "Second Advent"—whether in the person of Christ, Krishna, Sosiosh, or Buddha. The *Kalki Avatar,* or last (not "second") Advent, to wit, the appearance of the "Saviour of Humanity" or the "Faithful" *light of Truth,* on the White Horse of Death—death to falsehood, illusion, and idol, or *self*-worship—is a universal belief. Shall we for all that abstain from denouncing the behaviour of certain "Second Adventists" (as in America)? What *true* Christians shall see their co-religionists making fools of themselves, or disgracing their faith, and still abstain from rebuking them publicly as privately, for fear lest this *false* element should throw out of Christianity the rest of the believers? Can any of them praise his co-religionists for climbing periodically, in a state of paradisiacal *decolleté,* on the top of their houses, trees, and high places, there to await the "advent?" No doubt those who hope by stealing a march on their slower Brethren to find themselves hooked up the first, and carried *bodily* into Heaven, are as good Christians as any. Should they not be rebuked for their folly all the same? Strange logic!

THE WISE MAN COURTS TRUTH; THE FOOL, FLATTERY.

However it may be, let rather our ranks be made thinner, than the Theosophical Society go on being made a spectacle to the world through

the exaggerations of some fanatics, and the attempts of various charlatans to profit by a ready-made programme. These, by disfiguring and adapting Occultism to their own filthy and immoral ends, bring disgrace upon the whole movement. Some writer remarked that if one would know the enemy against whom he has to guard himself the most, the looking-glass will give him the best likeness of his face. This is quite true. If the first object of our Society be not to study one's own self, but to find fault with all except that self, then, indeed, the T.S. is doomed to become—and it already has in certain centres—a Society for mutual *admiration;* a fit subject for the satire of so acute an observer as we know the author of "The Talking Image of Urur" to be. This is our view and our policy. "And be it, indeed, that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself."

That such, however, is the policy of no other paper we know of—whether a daily, a weekly, a monthly, or a quarterly—we are quite aware. But, then, they are the public organs of the masses. Each has to pander to this or that other faction of politics or Society, and is doomed "to howl with the wolves," whether it likes or not. But our organs—*Lucifer* pre-eminently—are, or ought to be, the phonographs, so to speak, of the Theosophical Society, a body which is placed outside and beyond all centres of forced policy. We are painfully conscious that "He who tells the truth is turned out of nine cities"; that truth is unpalatable to most men; and that—since men must learn *to love the truth* before they thoroughly believe it—the truths we utter in our magazine are often as bitter as gall to many. This cannot be helped. Were we to adopt any other kind of policy, not only *Lucifer*—a very humble organ of Theosophy—but the Theosophical Society itself, would soon lose all its *raison d'etre* and become an anomaly.

But "who shall sit in the seat of the scorner?" Is it the timid in heart, who tremble at every opinion too boldly expressed in *Lucifer* lest it should displease this faction of readers or give offence to that other class of subscribers? Is it the "self-admirers," who resent every remark, however kindly expressed, if it happens to clash with *their* notions, or fails to show respect to *their* hobbies?

". . . . I am Sir Oracle
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!"

Surely we learn better and profit more by criticism than by flattery, and we amend our ways more through the abuse of our enemies than

the blind pandering of friends. Such satires as the "Fallen Idol," and such chelas as Nebelsen, have done more good to our Society, and certain of its members, than any "theosophical" novel; for they have shown up and touched *au vif* the foolish exaggerations of more than one enthusiast.

Self abnegation is possible only to those who have learnt to know themselves; to such as will never mistake *the echo of their own inner voice—that of selfish desire or passion—for the voice of divine inspiration, or an appeal from their* MASTER. Nor is *chelaship* consonant with mediumistic sensitiveness and its hallucinations; and therefore all the *sensitives* who have hitherto forced themselves into discipleship have generally made fools of themselves, and, sooner or later, thrown ridicule upon the T.S. But after the publication of the "Fallen Idol" more than one such exhibition was stopped. "The Talking Image of Urur" may then render the same, if not better, service. If some traits in its various *dramatis personæ* fit in some particulars certain members who still belong to the Society, other characters—and the most successful of them—resemble rather certain Ex-members; fanatics, in the past, bitter enemies now—conceited fools at all times. Furthermore "Puffer" is a compound and very vivid photograph. It *may* be that of several members of the T.S., but it looks also like a deluded victim of other bogus Esoteric and Occult Societies. One of such just sprung up at Boston, U.S.A., is now being nipped in the bud and exposed by our own Theosophists.

These are the "Solar adepts" spoken of in our January editorial, the *âmes damnées* of shameful commercial enterprises. No event could vindicate the policy of our journal better than the timely exposure of the *pseudo*-adepts, those "Sages of the Ages" who bethought themselves of trading upon the public hunger for the marvellous *ad absurdum.* We did well to speak of them in the editorial as we have. It was timely and lucky for us to have pointed to the ring leaders of that shameful speculation—the sale of bogus occult knowledge. For we have averted thereby a great and new danger to the Society—namely that of unscrupulous charlatans being taken for Theosophists. Misled by their lies and their publications filled with terms from Eastern philosophy and with ideas they had bodily stolen from us only to disfigure and misapply them—the American press has already referred to them as Theosophists. Whether out of sheer flippancy, or actual malice,

some dailies have headed their sensational articles with "Theosophic Knaves," and "Pantognomostic Theosophs," etc, etc. This is pure fiction. The editor of the "Esoteric" had never been at any time a member of our society, or of any of its numerous Branches. "ADHY-APAKA, *alias* the Hellenic ETHNOMEDON and ENPHORON, *alias* the Greco-Tibetan, *Ens-movens* OM *mane padmn* AUM" *(sic)* was our enemy from the beginning of his career. As impudently stated by him to a reporter, we theosophists hated him for his "many virtues!" Nor has the Sage "bent under the weight of centuries," the VIDYA NYAIKA, said to be represented by a person called Eli Ohmart, had anything to do with the T.S. The two worthies had, like two venomous wily spiders, spread their webs far and wide, and numerous are the Yankee flies caught in them. But thanks to the energy of some of our Boston Members, the two hideous desecrators of Eastern philosophy are exposed. In the words of the "Boston Globe," this is the—

"WEIRD TALE WHICH MAY HAVE A SEQUEL IN COURT."

"If there are no arrests made, I shall go right on with the work; but if they make trouble, I shall stay and face the music."

Hiram Erastus Butler, the esoteric philosopher of 478 Shawmut avenue, uttered the foregoing sentiment to a *Globe* reporter last evening as calmly as one would make a casual remark about the weather.

Thereby hangs a tale, a long, complicated, involuted, weird, mystical, scientific, hysterical tale—a tale of love and intrigue, of adventure, of alleged and to some extent of admitted swindling, of charges of a horrible and unspeakable immorality, of communion with embodied and disembodied spirits, and especially of money. In short, a tale that would make your head weary and your heart faint if you attempted to follow out all its labyrinthine details and count the cogs on its wheels within wheels. A tale that quite possibly may find its sequel in the courts, where judge, jury, and counsel will have a chance to cudgel their brains over almost every mystery in the known universe.

These are the *heroes* whom certain timid Theosophists—those who raised their voices against the publication of the "Talking Image of Urur"—advised us to leave alone. Had it not been for that unwillingness to expose even impersonal things and deeds, our editorial would have been more explicit. Far from us be the desire to "attack" or "expose" even our enemies, so long as they harm only ourselves, personally and individually. But here the whole of the Theosophical body

—already so maligned, opposed, and persecuted—was endangered, and its destinies were hanging in the balance, because of that impudent *pseudo* esoteric speculation. He, therefore, who maintains in the face of the Boston scandal, that we did not act rightly in tearing off the sanctimonious mask of Pecksniffian piety and the "Wisdom of the Ages" which covered the grimacing face of a most bestial immorality, of insatiable greediness for lucre and impudence, fire, water, and police proof—is no true Theosophist. How minds, even of an average intelligence, could be caught by such transparent snares as these publicly exhibited by the two worthies, to wit: Adhy-Apaka and Vidya Nyaika —traced by the American press to one Hiram E. Butler and Eli Ohmart —passes all comprehension! Suffice to read the pamphlet issued by the two confederates, to see at the first glance that it was a mere repetition —more enlarged and barefaced, and with a wider, bolder programme, still a repetition—of the now defunct "H. B. of L." with its mysterious appeals of four years ago to the "Dissatisfied" with "the Theosophical Mahatmas." The two hundred pages of the wildest balderdash constitute their "Appeal from the Unseen and the Unknown" and the "Interior of the Inmost" (?) to "the Awakened." *Pantognomos* and *Ekphoron* offer to teach the unwary "the laws of ENS, MOVENS, and OM," and appeal for money. *Vidya Nyaika* and *Ethnomedon* propose to initiate the ignorant into the "*a priori Sambudhistic* (?) philosophy of Kapila" and—beg for hard cash. The story is so sickening that we dislike to stain our pages with its details. But now to the moral of the fable.

YE SPURNED THE SUBSTANCE AND HAVE CLUTCHED THE SHADOW.

For fourteen years our Theosophical Society has been before the public. Born with the three-fold object of infusing a little more mutual brotherly feeling in mankind; of investigating the mysteries of nature from the Spiritual and Psychic aspect; and, of doing a tardy justice to the civilizations and Wisdom of Eastern pre-Christian nations and literature, if it did not do all the good that a richer Society might, it certainly did no harm. It appealed only to those who found no help for their perplexities anywhere else. To those lost in the psychic riddles of Spiritualism, or such, again, as, unable to stand the morbid atmosphere of modern unbelief, and seeking light in vain from the unfathomable mysteries taught by the theology of the thousand and one

Christian sects, had given up all hope of solving any of the problems of life. There was no entrance fee during the first two years of the Society's existence; afterwards, when the correspondence and postage alone demanded hundreds of pounds a year, new members had to pay £1 for their diploma. Unless one wanted to support the movement, one could remain a Fellow all his life without being asked for a penny, and two-thirds of our members have never put their hand in their pocket, nor were they asked to do so. Those who supported the cause were from the first a few devoted Theosophists who laboured without conditions or any hope for reward. Yet no association was more insulted and laughed at than the Theosophical Society. No members of any body were spoken of in more contemptuous terms than the Fellows of the T.S. from the first. The Society was born in America, and therefore it was regarded in England with disfavour and suspicion. We were considered as fools and knaves, victims and frauds before the benevolent interference of the Psychic Research Society, which tried to build its reputation on the downfall of Theosophy and Spiritualism, but really harmed neither. Nevertheless, when our enemies got the upper hand, and by dint of slander and inventions had most maliciously succeeded in placing before the credulous public, ever hungry for scandals and sensations, *mere conjectures as undeniable and proven facts,* it was the American press which became the most bitter in its denunciations of Theosophy, and the American public the most willing to drink in and giggle over the undeserved calumnies upon the Founders of the T.S. Yet it is they who were the first told, through our Society, of the actual existence of Eastern Adepts in Occult Sciences. But both the English and the American spurned and scoffed at the very idea, while even the Spiritualists and Mystics, who ought to have known better, would, with a few exceptions, have nothing to do with *heathen* Masters of Wisdom. The latter were, they maintained, "*invented* by the Theosophists:" it was all "moonshine." For these "Masters," whom no member was ever asked to accept, unless he liked to do so himself, on whose behalf *no supernatural claim was ever made,* unless, perhaps, in the too ardent imagination of enthusiasts; these Masters who *gave* to, and often *helped* with money, poor Theosophists, but never asked anything of the rich—these MASTERS *were too much like real men.* They neither claimed to be gods nor spirits, nor did they pander to people's gush and sentimental creeds. And now those Americans have got at last

what their hearts yearned for: a bona fide ideal of an adept and magician. A creature several thousand years old. A *true-blue* "Buddhist—Brahmin" who appeals to Jehovah, or *Jahveh,* speaks of Christ and the Messianic cycle, and blesses them with an AMEN and an "OM MANE PADMI HUM" in the same breath, relieving them at the same time of 40,000 dollars before they are a month old in their worship of him. . . . *Wullahy!* Allah is great and—"Vidya Nyaika" is his only prophet. Indeed we feel little pity for the victims. What is the *psychology* that some Theosophists are accused of exercising over their victims in comparison with this? And this neccessitates a few words of explanation.

IGNORANCE NOT ALTOGETHER BLISS.

All know that there is a tacit, often openly-expressed, belief among a few of the Fellows of the T.S. that a certain prominent Theosophist among the leaders of the Society *psychologizes* all those who happen to come within the area of that individual's influence. Dozens, nay, hundreds, were, and still are, "psychologized." The hypnotic effect seems so strong as to virtually transform all such "unfortunates" into irresponsible nincompoops, mere cyphers and tools of that theosophical Circe. This idiotic belief was originally started by some "wise men" of the West. Unwilling to admit that the said person had either any knowledge or *powers,* bent on discrediting their victim, and yet unable to explain certain abnormal occurrences, they hit upon this happy and *logical* loophole to get out of their difficulties. The theory found a grateful and fruitful soil. Henceforth, whenever any Fellows connected theosophically with the said "psychologizer" happen to disagree in their views upon questions, metaphysical or even purely administrative, with some other member—"on despotism bent," forthwith the latter comes out with the favourite solution: "Oh, they are psychologized!" The *magic* WORD springs out on the arena of discussion like a Jack-in-a-box, and forthwith the attitude of the "rebels" is explained and plausibly accounted for.

Of course the alleged "psychology" has really no existence outside the imagination of those who are too vain to allow any opposition to *their* all-wise and autocratic decrees on any other ground than phenomenal—nay, *magical*—interference with their will. A short analysis of the Karmic effects that would be produced by the exercise of such powers may prove interesting to theosophists.

Even on the terrestrial, purely physical plane, moral irresponsibility ensures impunity. Parents are answerable for their children, tutors and guardians for their pupils and wards, and even the Supreme Courts have admitted extenuating circumstances for criminals who are proved to have been led to crime by a will or influences stronger than their own. How much more forcibly this law of simple retributive justice must act on the psychic plane; and what, therefore, may be the responsibility incurred by using such psychological powers, in the face of Karma and its punitive laws, may be easily inferred. Is it not evident that, if even human justice recognizes the impossibility of punishing an irrational idiot, a child, a minor, etc., taking into account even hereditary causes and bad family influences—that the divine Law of Retribution, which we call KARMA, must visit with hundredfold severity one who deprives reasonable, thinking men of their *free will* and powers of ratiocination? From the occult standpoint, the charge is simply one of black magic, of *envoûtement.* Alone a *Dugpa,* with "Avitchi" yawning at the further end of his life cycle, could risk such a thing. Have those so prompt to hurl the charge at the head of persons in their way, ever understood the whole terrible meaning implied in the accusation? We doubt it. No Occultist, no intelligent student of the mysterious laws of the "night side of Nature," no one who knows anything of Karma, would ever suggest such an explanation. What adept or even a moderately-informed chela would ever risk an endless future by interfering with, and therefore *taking upon himself, the Karmic debit of all those whom he would so psychologize as to make of them merely the tools of his own sweet will!*

This fact seems so evident and palpably flagrant, that it is absurd to have to recall it to those who boast of knowing *all* about Karma.

Is it not enough to bear the burden of the knowledge that from birth to death, the least, the most unimportant, unit of the human family exercises an influence over, and receives in his turn, as unconsciously as he breathes, that of every other unit whom he approaches, or who comes in contact with him? Each of us either adds to or diminishes the sum total of human happiness and human misery, "not only of the present, but of every subsequent age of humanity," as shown so ably by Elihu Burritt, who says:—

> There is no sequestered spot in the Universe, no dark niche along the disc of non-existence, from which he (man) can retreat from

> his relations to others, where he can withdraw the influence of his existence upon the moral destiny of the world; everywhere his presence or absence will be felt—everywhere he will have companions who will be better or worse for his influence. It is an old saying, and one of fearful and fathoming import, that *we are forming characters for eternity.* Forming characters! Whose? Our own or others? Both—and in that momentous fact lies the peril and responsibility of our existence. Who is sufficient for the thought? Thousands of my fellow-beings will yearly enter eternity* with characters differing from those they would have carried thither had I never lived. The sunlight of that world will reveal my finger-marks in their primary formations, and in their successive strata of thought and life.

These are the words of a profound thinker. And if the simple fact of our living changes the sum of human weal and woe—in a way for which we are, owing to our ignorance, entirely irresponsible—what must be the Karmic decree in the matter of influencing hundreds of people by an act perpetrated and carried on for years in premeditation *and the full consciousness* of what we are doing!

Verily the man or woman in the unconscious possession of such dangerous powers had much better never be born. The Occultist who exercises them consciously will be caught up by the whirlwind of successive rebirths, without even an hour of rest. Woe to him, then, in that ceaseless, dreary series of terrestrial *Avitchis;* in that interminable æon of torture, suffering, and despair, during which, like the squirrel doomed to turn the wheel at every motion, he will launch from one life of misery into another, only to awake each time with a fresh burden of other people's Karma, which he will have drawn upon himself! Is it not enough, indeed, to be regarded as "frauds, cranks, and infidels," by the outsiders, without being identified with *wizards* and *witches* by our own members!

The Genus "Infidel" and Its Varieties.

It is true to say that the varieties of infidels are many, and that one "infidel" differs from another infidel as a Danish boar-hound differs from the street mongrel. A man may be the most heterodox infidel with regard to orthodox dogmas. Yet, provided he proclaims himself loudly a Christian, that heterodoxy—when even going to the length of saying that "revealed religion is an imposture"—will be regarded by

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* *Devachan,* rather; the *entr'acte* between two incarnations.

some as simply "of that exalted kind which rises above all human forms."*

A "Christian" of such a kind may—as the late Laurence Oliphant has—give vent to a still more startling theory. He may affirm that he considers that "from time to time the Divine Influence emanates itself, so to speak, in phenomenal persons. Sakyamouni was such; Christ was such; and such I consider Mr. (Lake) Harris to be—in fact, he is a new avatar,"** and still remain a Christian of an *"exalted kind"* in the sight of the "Upper Ten." But let an "infidel" of the Theosophical Society say *just the same* (*minus* the absurdity of including the American Lake Harris in the list of the *Avatars*), and no contumely heaped upon him by clergy and servile newspapers will ever be found too strong!

But this belongs properly to the paradoxes of the Age; though the *Avataric* idea has much to do with Karma and rebirth, and that belief in reincarnation has nothing in it that can militate against the teachings of Christ. We affirm, furthermore, that the great Nazarene Adept distinctly taught it. So did Paul and the Synoptics, and nearly all the earliest Church Fathers, with scarcely an exception, accepted it, while some actually taught the doctrine.

Do Not Start Two Hares at Once.

From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step, and Karma acts along every line, on nations as on men. The Japanese Mikado is tottering towards his end for having played too long at *hide and seek* with his worshippers. Hundreds of shrewd Americans have been taken in through disbelieving in truths and lending a too credulous ear to bold lies. A French abbé has fallen under Karmic penalty for coquetting too openly with Theosophy, and attempted to mirror himself, like a modern clerical Narcissus, in the too deep waters of Eastern Occultism. The Abbé Roca, an honourary *chanoine* (canon) in the diocese of Perpignan, our old friend and irrepressible adversary in the French *Lotus* a year ago—has come to grief. Yet his ambition was quite an innocent one, if rather difficult of realization. It was founded on a dream of his; a reconciliation between Pantheistic Theosophy and a Socialistic Latin Church, with a fancy Pope at the head of it. He longed to see the Masters of Wisdom of old India and Eastern Occultism

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* *Vide* Lady Grant Duff's article "Laurence Oliphant" in the *"Contemporary Review"* for February: pages 185 and 188.

** *Ibid.* Quoted from Sir Thomas Wade's notes, by Lady Grant Duff—page 186.

under the sway of Rome *regenerated,* and amused himself with predicting the same. Hence a frantic race between his meridional phantasy and the clerical bent of his thought. Poor, eloquent abbé! Did he not already perceive the Kingdom of Heaven in the new Rome-Jerusalem? A new Pontiff seated on a throne made out of the *cranium* of Macroprosopus, with the *Zohar* in his right pocket, *Chochmah,* the male Sephiroth (transformed by the good abbé into the Mother of God), in his left, and a "Lamb" stuffed with dynamite, in the paternal Popish embrace. The "Wise Men" of the East were even now, he said, crossing the Himalayas, and "led by the Star" of Theosophy, would soon be worshipping at the shrine of the reformed Pope and Lamb. It was a glorious dream—alas, still but a dream. But he persisted in calling us the "greatest of Christian-Buddhists." (*Lotus,* February, 1888.) Unfortunately for himself he also called the Pope of the "Cæsaro-papal Rome" "the Satan of the seven hills," in the same number. Result: Pope Leo XIII asserts once more the proverbial ingratitude of theological Rome. He has just deprived our poetical and eloquent friend and adversary, the Abbé Roca, of the—

> exercise of all his functions in Holy Orders, as also of his living, for refusing to submit to a decree by which his works were placed on the Index Expurgatorius. These works bore the titles of "Christ, the Pope, and the Democracy;" "The Fatal Crisis and the Salvation of Europe;" and "The End of the World." Even in the face of the present papal decision, he is advertising the appearance of a fourth work, entitled "Glorieux Centenaire," 1889. "Monde Nouveau." "Nouveaux Cieux, nouvelle Terre."

According to *Galignani*—(and his own articles and letters in theosophical organs, we may add) the fearless—

> Abbé has for some time (says *Galignani*), been denouncing the Papacy as a creature of Cæsar, and as wholly preoccupied with the question of its temporalities in face of the crying needs of humanity. According to his view, the Divine aid was promised the Church until the end of the world, or of the age; and the Cæsarean age having passed away, all things are to be made new. He looks forward to a spiritual coming of Christ by the spread of the modern sentiment of "liberty, equality, fraternity, toleration, solidarity, and mutuality," in the atmosphere of the Gospel. Although his views do not appear to be very clear, he argues that the Gospel is passing from "the mystico-sentimental phase to the organico-social phase, thanks to the progress of science, which will illumine everything. (The *Globe.*)

This is only what had to be expected. The Abbé would not accept

our joint warnings and took no heed of them. The sad epilogue of our polemics is given (not altogether correctly as regards the present writer) in the same *Globe,* wherein the news is wound up in the following words:—

> He has been contending, in the *Lotus,* in favour of a union of the East and the West by means of a fusion between Buddhism and the Christian Gospel; but Mdme. Blavatsky, the foremost European convert to the Indian religion, has emphatically repudiated all attempts at such a union, because she cannot or will not accept the authority of Christ. The Abbé Roca is therefore left out in the cold.

This is not so. What "Mdme. Blavatsky" replied in the *Lotus* (December 1887) to the Abbé's assertions that the said *fusion* between his Church and Theosophy would surely come, was this: . . . "We are not as optimistic as he (the Abbé Roca) is. His church sees in vain her greatest 'mysteries' unmasked and the fact proclaimed in every country by scholars versed in Orientalism and Symbology as by Theosophists; and we refuse to believe that she will ever accept our truths or confess her errors. And as, on the other hand, no true theosophist will accept any more a *carnalised* Christ according to the Latin dogma than an anthropomorphic God, and still less a 'Pastor' in the person of a Pope, it is not the adepts who will ever go toward 'the Mount of Salvation,' (as invited by the Abbé). They will rather wait that the Mahomet of Rome should go to the trouble of taking the path which leads to Mount Meru." . . .

This is not rejecting "the authority of Christ" if the latter be regarded as we and Laurence Oliphant regarded Him, *i.e.* as an *Avatar* like Gautama Buddha and other great adepts who became the vehicles or *Reincarnations* of the "one" Divine Influence. What most of us will never accept is the anthropomorphized *"charmant docteur"* of Renan, or the Christ of Torquemada and Calvin rolled into one. Jesus, the Adept we believe in, taught our Eastern doctrines, KARMA and REINCARNATION foremost of all. When the so-called Christians will have learnt to read the New Testament between the lines, their eyes will be opened and—they will see.

We propose to deal with the subject of Karma and Reincarnation in our next issue. Meanwhile, we are happy to see that a fair wind is blowing over Christendom and propels European thought more and more Eastward.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

ONE of the things most noticeable in theosophical study classes is the different approach to Theosophical literature (particularly to the articles by H.P.B. and W.Q.J.) shown by the older generation Theosophists and the contemporaries of Youth-Companions. What might younger students learn from their seniors? Conversely, what can the older students gain by a serious consideration of the approaches that younger students employ?

It is true, I think, that, generally speaking, there are differences in the approaches that younger and older Theosophists employ. Is a criterion of age basic enough in relation to the factors that advance the growth of the mind? It is debatable, at least, that such a standard is sufficiently radical—especially when viewed in the light of the theosophical conception of soul evolution. The phrase, "old souls in young bodies," indicates that one always consciously lives some "life of soul," at each age level, instead of unconsciously or automatically growing into adulthood as a "product" of our culture. While the conditioning effects of the latter are obvious as we appraise the mind of the race, it would be our contention that the active theosophic mind in large part is able to, and does, transcend the bias and limitations of Western civilization. Of course Theosophists are also influenced in degree by societal delusions, but the younger generation of Theosophists have perhaps a better chance to be free from such shackles than their seniors who did not grow up in a theosophic atmosphere.

The essential distinction that needs to be made, we may easily conclude, is in terms of the varying stages of intellectual and manasic awareness. Instead of distinguishing between age-groups, it seems that the first division is between "thinking" and "non-thinking" theosophists. This phraseology, however, presents a contradiction in terms. For by definition a Theosophist must be a thinker—an *original* thinker. Hence the judicious (and therefore thinking) "theosophist" is the last one to be found feeling himself an adequate representative of Theosophy. He will gladly admit to being a student of Theosophy, perhaps assert that he is a "theosophist" in a limited sense, but realizing the implications, he will go no further. "Non-thinking" enthusiasts, however, often become unconsciously pretentious.

Obviously, *every* student, young or old, does some original thinking over the course of a lifetime—and to that extent, "he is a Theosophist; a seeker after the eternal truth with an 'inspiration of his own' to solve the universal problems." In offering this definition, and by endorsing Vaughan's definition, incidentally, H.P.B. explicitly included not only "every great thinker and philosopher, especially every founder of a new religion" (or sect), but "atheists" and broad-minded materialists.

Nor does this arbitrary distinction between "thinking" and "non-thinking" students tend to invalidate the concept of "faith"; on the contrary, it remains as a necessary condition for all who strive to assimilate occult truths. The thinking student knows that he is a philosopher only insofar as he has faith in his own spiritual intuition, his own power to grow in understanding, and in his acceptance of the destiny that natural law is continually exhibiting. Unfortunately, the "believing" student is prone to embody, besides real *faith,* its popular counterfeit, blind belief. This variety is invariably based, as H.P.B. clearly points out in the *Key,* on authority—not knowledge. It is unfortunate because, by definition, "authority" discourages the growth of knowledge, even if faith be in the "authority of the Teachings."

In answer to the original question, then, the non-questioning students must learn eventually by way of the thinking students (of whatever age) that the *will to discover for oneself* is a prerequisite to knowledge. The younger students of thoughtful bent, if they take advantage of the relationship, may learn from older-generation associates the use, scope, and value of doctrine. Of course, it is often difficult to take advantage of this relationship, due to mechanical differences in approach, *i.e.,* differences in vocabulary and points of reference. These differences are, however, mostly superficial, and the "unversed" students may do well to harken to their more scholarly elders. Older students, on the other hand, will be encouraged to keep in touch with the endeavors of modern writers and educators (whose work has some relevance to the Theosophical Movement) if they feel a sense of participation in the attempts of their younger contemporaries to integrate these with the implications of Theosophic philosophy.

What has happened to a man when he has no questions to ask?

Julie Closson Kenly, author of the children's book, *Green Magic,* stresses that children are naturally curious, observant of little things

that pass before our eyes unnoticed, always wondering why something is the way it is. To a child, *seeking* for new things makes his world a joy. But it is a special sign of inner growing when a child does more than notice the life around him and tries to understand it, when he brings his mind into focus with what he sees and his imagination is awakened. "Children are almost universally original. What becomes of this originality?" asks Julie Kenly. Indeed, what does become of this spark of creativity?

It would seem that a child would steadily become more and more desirous of finding ideas broad enough to bring him closer to understanding himself and his relationship to his fellow beings. Instead, it appears that as a child becomes an adult, this creative quality is hidden beneath the surface of the personality. It is not uncommon to meet people who are indifferent to questions that concern the very roots of existence. Most people seem to be happy—or pretend to be happy—keeping the tangible part of themselves satisfied. So what happens between the stage of happy, inquisitive childhood and "adulthood"? There must be more to it than just that the child is not yet aware of the responsibilities in living. For many a creative man of spiritual quality has been fully aware of the woes and sufferings of mankind.

In Chapter 14 of *The Bhagavad-Gita,* Krishna explains the three qualities to Arjuna, the third being the quality of indifference or darkness, *tamas.* It is possible to correlate the quality of *tamas* with the state of mind where no questions are present. If a man does not at least wonder about the world he finds himself in, or the nature of his being, he is indeed in a state of indifference and unable even to see that there is more to life than what he can understand with little difficulty. If this has happened, then he is living in just part of his mind, and feeling only a small fraction of the subtleties he might discover. This is far from living "the life of the soul." To quote Kenly again: "Any bored or incurious state of mind tends to make us spiritual paupers."

The asking of questions necessitates a fearlessness of mind and an innate sense of security. One can not be willing to put his dearest conviction up for questioning for the sake of finding truth—*wherever* it may be found—if he does not have a deep sense of inner security.

THE SPIRIT OF FREE INQUIRY

VI

RUNNING closely parallel with the Reformation's challenge to papal absolutism—a challenge from within the domain of religion itself—was another and more formidable challenge from the secular side of society: the challenge of a newly evolving science. Science was soon to throw down its gauntlet to all theological parties, and even to all metaphysical, transcendental philosophies. The appeal of science was to the Book of Nature, and it expressly repudiated any rival volumes resting on an asserted divine authority or on mere human opinion. The scientific movement came gradually into being as a reaction against the dogmas of the theologians, dogmas not capable of rational explanation, which were contrary to the known order of nature, and had to be accepted on blind faith. As all cultural historians have noted, the pendulum of thought, reacting to the ignorance and the pretense of the theologians, swung to the extreme opposite direction—science taking the position that unless theories can be proved by the known laws and processes of nature, they deserve no attention.

The scientific insistence that all phenomena must come under law is sound enough, provided it be also conceded that "there may be laws once 'known', now unknown." A fundamental tenet of Theosophy, as of Science, is that there is no miracle. "Everything that happens is the result of law—eternal, immutable, ever active." Thus the rise of modern science, with its appeal to reason, was part of the greater Theosophical Movement in the same sense that the Protestant Reformation was—both were revolutionary challenges to sacerdotal authority. Let the spirit of free inquiry only awaken—no matter how, or, by what means—and there exists the possibility of reaching the truth.

The first epochal event in the field of science was the pronouncement by the Polish astronomer, Copernicus, that the sun, and not the earth, is the center of the Solar System, and that the earth and the other planets move around the sun. Copernicus, who lived and carried on his astronomical observations and studies in the early part of the sixteenth century, stood astride of the boundary line of a new era. He commenced his labors at a time when the belief in the immobility of the earth was almost universal in Europe. He carried on his researches

for the greater part of his life, and did so a hundred years before the invention of telescopes. But the implications of the Copernican view were only slowly grasped. His celebrated work, written in 1530, *De Orbium coelestium Revolutionibus,* was formally dedicated to Pope Paul III, and Copernicus was not molested by the Roman Church, his work creating no particular furor in Europe at that time. It was otherwise with Galileo, the celebrated Italian physicist and astronomer, when, about a century later, he declared himself in favor of the Copernican system. The Jesuits promptly denounced him as a heretic and haled him before the tribunal of the Inquisition. Rather than face martyrdom, he formally renounced his views. After such recantation, he is said to have exclaimed: *"E pur si muove!"* (And yet the earth does move!)

But neither Copernicus nor Galileo were, in any sense, discoverers of the heliocentric system, although both are entitled to full credit for independent researches and corroboratory evidence. The heliocentric system was taught and known from time immemorial, but, as a secret temple-teaching, it was not generally known. As stated in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 35):

> The world is always ungrateful to its great men. Florence has built a statue to Galileo, but hardly even mentions Pythagoras. The former had a ready guide in the treatises of Copernicus, who had been obliged to contend against the universally established Ptolemaic system. But neither Galileo nor modern astronomy discovered the emplacement of the planetary bodies. Thousands of ages before, it was taught by the sages of Middle Asia, and brought thence by Pythagoras, not as a speculation, but as a demonstrated science.

The scientific demonstration of the truth of the heliocentric system, and its inevitable acceptance in spite of the Medieval Church, marked the beginning of a new era in the growth of free inquiry. For here was not only a great advance in astronomical knowledge, but the return of a wider and deeper outlook on life, just as its opposite—the belief that the earth was flat and the immovable center of the universe—exercised an inhibitory influence upon any awakening of the inner mental and spiritual faculties of man. The geocentric outlook could be said to be that of Lower *Manas* unenlightened by its Higher Prototype. The heliocentric outlook, requiring a high degree of abstract thought, is of the nature of the Higher Mind, and necessarily stimulates a correspondingly broadened outlook in every department of human thought.

If man is the microcosm of the macrocosm, then there must be a correspondence between the expansion of his inner faculties and his advance in knowledge of the universe around him; and vice versa, as man enlarges his concept of the objective universe, his consciousness—his mind and soul—deepens correspondingly. The parallel growth of the subjective faculties and the knowledge of the objective world is productive, under the law of universal affinity, of still another and beneficent result: it brings the seeker's mind in contact with other similar and more enlightened Minds of the past and the present; and thus, if one's search is determined enough, he may discover the unbroken thread of the Wisdom-Religion all down the ages. Both Copernicus and Galileo contacted an aspect of this thread through Pythagoras, Plato, and other Greek Philosopher-Scientists, for it was from these Predecessors that they first learned of the heliocentric system. It may be of interest to observe, in this connection, that Aristotle, who repudiated Plato, and thus broke with the Predecessors, opposed the heliocentric system and held stubbornly to the geocentric; and it is also of interest to note that the categorical nature of thought during the Middle Ages followed Aristotle rather than Plato. Here a law of psychic affinity is evident.

The following from *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 153) is enlightening at this juncture:

> The Aristotle-Baconian method may have its advantages, but it has undeniably demonstrated its defects. Pythagoras and Plato, who proceeded from the Universals downwards, are now shown more learned, in the light of modern science, than was Aristotle. For he opposed and denounced the idea of the revolution of the earth and even of its rotundity. "Almost all those," he wrote, "who affirm that they have studied heaven in its uniformity, claim that the earth is in the center, but the philosophers of the Italian School, otherwise called the Pythagoreans, teach entirely the contrary . . ." Because (*a*) the Pythagoreans were Initiates, and (*b*) they followed the deductive method. Whereas Aristotle, the father of the inductive system, complained of those who taught that "the center of our system was occupied by the Sun, and the earth was only a star, which by a rotatory motion around the same center, produces night and day." (*Vide De Cœlo,* Book II., c. 13.)

The Father of modern science is said to be Francis Bacon, whose inductive method *The Secret Doctrine* traces to Aristotle. The "new" method was developed in his work, *Novum Organum,* published in

1620. Its title means, literally, new method, or instrument. A leading occult maxim, based on the law of correspondence and analogy, is, "As above, so below." But from this, its opposite, "As below, so above," does not necessarily follow. "The above," which is really "the within," is the spiritual, the noumenal, and the immortal; "the below" is the material, the phenomenal, and the transitory—at best a passing aspect and reflection of the former. Thus Occultism always begins with "the Above," or Spirit. Bacon's inductive method materialized his thinking in other fields than science, affecting his philosophical and religious concepts.

The two contrasting methods and views are strikingly shown in the following passage from the *Secret Doctrine,* Vol. I, 481:

> For the occultists it (Light) is both Spirit and Matter. Behind the "mode of motion," now regarded as "the property of matter" and nothing more, they perceive the radiant noumenon. It is the "Spirit of Light," the first born of the Eternal pure Element, whose energy (or emanation) is stored in the Sun, the great Life-Giver of the physical world, as the hidden Concealed Sun is the Light- and Life-Giver of the Spiritual and Psychic Realms. Bacon was one of the first to strike the keynote of materialism, not only by his inductive method (renovated from ill-digested Aristotle), but by the general tenor of his writings. He inverts the order of mental Evolution when saying that "the first Creation of God was the light of the sense; the last was the light of the reason; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of the Spirit." It is just the reverse. The light of Spirit is the eternal Sabbath of the mystic or occultist, and he pays little attention to that of mere sense. That which is meant by the allegorical sentence, *"Fiat Lux"* is—when esoterically rendered—"Let there be the 'Sons of Light'," or the noumena of all phenomena.

While the challenge of science to arbitrary religious authority was slowly gathering strength, the dark centuries were not without outstanding witnesses to the existence of the Theosophical Movement, and some of these, because of the special conditions of the times, worked in and through the Church itself. Roger Bacon, who lived in the thirteenth century in England, and who must not be confused with Francis Bacon, was one such witness. Although ostensibly a Franciscan monk, he was, in reality, according to H. P. Blavatsky's *Theosophical Glossary,* "an adept in Alchemy and Magic Arts; he believed in the philosopher's stone *in the way all the adepts of Occultism believe in it;* and also in philosophical astrology." Roger Bacon was also profi-

cient in science. "He was a wonderful physicist and chemist, and credited with having *invented* gunpowder, though he said he had the secret from 'Asian (Chinese) wise men'."

Another witness from within the Church was Giordano Bruno, a Dominican monk who lived and worked during the latter half of the sixteenth century. He boldly declared himself a follower of the School of Pythagoras, and an opponent of the then prevailing doctrines of the Aristotelian philosophy. He taught that the universe is infinite and immeasurable, and held to the doctrine of the plurality of worlds. This alone, at a time when the new system of Copernicus was being violently attacked by the Church, was enough to bring him under the eye of the Inquisition. He died at the stake, a martyr to his convictions. He not only refused to recant and thus save his life, but fearlessly and dispassionately continued to declare himself—like all true disciples of the ancient masters. The text of this profession of faith is given in full in *Isis Unveiled:*

> I hold, in brief, to an infinite universe, that is, an effect of infinite power, because I esteemed it a thing unworthy of divine goodness and power, that, being able to produce besides this world another and infinite others, it should produce a finite world. Thus I have declared that there are infinite particular worlds similar to this of the earth, which, with Pythagoras, I understand to be a star similar in nature with the moon, the other planets, and the other stars, which are infinite; and that all those bodies are worlds, and without number, which thus constitute the infinite universality in an infinite space, and this is called the infinite universe, in which are innumerable worlds, so that there is a double kind of infinite greatness in the universe, and of a multitude of worlds.

Another "witness on the scene" was Paracelsus—the symbolical name adopted by the greatest Occultist of the middle ages. He was a great physician, and obtained his knowledge and his remedies direct from the Book of Nature, both visible and invisible. He was not only a most learned and erudite philosopher, mystic and alchemist; he also made outstanding contributions to science, particularly in the fields of chemistry, magnetism and physiology. He was the discoverer of nitrogen gas, or rather its re-discoverer; he knew about oxygen, the discovery of which is credited to Priestley, although it was well known to all Rosicrucian alchemists. He anticipated Mesmer by over two centuries by his knowledge of the hidden and curative powers of magnets

and of animal magnetism. Paracelsus thus incurred the implacable enmity of the Roman Church, which feared the effects on its power of the dissemination of such knowledge, both occult and scientific. He was soon surrounded by enemies on all sides, and died at the hands of an assassin when only forty-eight years old.

Science grew slowly and steadily, receiving, as we have instanced in the cases of Roger Bacon and Paracelsus, much indirect help and stimulus from the alchemists and so-called magicians—help which science has either been unwilling to acknowledge, or, when forced to do so by indisputable facts, has done so in a niggardly spirit and in poor grace. Had such recognition been open-hearted and in a spirit of gratitude, science would never have shunted itself so far into the blind alley of materialism. As William Q. Judge wrote in his article, "The Synthesis of Occult Science:" "It can easily be shown that every real discovery and every important advancement in modern science have already been anticipated centuries ago by ancient science and philosophy." The chief obstacles to this recognition have been "the prejudice, the scorn and contempt of ancient learning by modern thought."

The two streams of research and knowledge, the modern, and the ancient and perennial, were destined to meet and clash openly in the eighteenth century, when modern science, so to speak, reached its "teens" and thought it "knew it all." What occasioned this face-to-face conflict was the rise of a new order of phenomena: mesmerism or animal magnetism and its marvellous healing power. Modern science by this time had itself become "institutionalized," with hard-and-fast methods and attitudes, comparable to theological dogmas. It had and still has, its highly organized bodies, its societies and its academies with their authoritative heads, capable of ostracizing those who question their authority, or venture into disapproved channels of inquiry.

Science in the eighteenth century became quite "official" and self-sufficient, and its status in France at the time of Mesmer is thus described by H.P.B. in her article "Black Magic in Science":

> It was the REIGN OF REASON, and of science—in its teens; the beginning of the great deadly struggle between Theology and Facts, Spirituality and Materialism. In the educated classes of Society too much faith had been succeeded by no faith at all. The cycle of Science-worship had just set in, with its pilgrimages to the Academy, the Olympus where the "Forty Immortals" are enshrined, and its raids

> upon every one who refused to manifest a noisy admiration, a kind of juvenile calf's enthusiasm, at the door of the Fane of Science. When Mesmer arrived, Paris divided its allegiance between the Church which attributed all kinds of phenomena except its own *divine miracles* to the Devil, and the Academy, which believed in neither God nor Devil, but only in its own infallible wisdom.

Mesmer's cures through the direct transmission of animal magnetism were so impressive, producing such interest and excitement in Paris, that the French King ordered the French Academy to look into the matter. Mesmer, as students of the Theosophical Movement are aware, was one of the Agents of the Movement in connection with the centenary effort of the eighteenth century. This is why the investigation of mesmerism by the body of official scientists and savants which formed the French Academy was of considerable importance, constituting the first direct contact between the Eternal stream of Spiritual Knowledge, known as the Theosophical Movement, and the official interest of a newly arisen science.

The committee of investigation included some of the then most prominent scientists, men such as Bailly, the astronomer; Lavoisier, an eminent chemist; Magendie, a noted physiologist; Dr. Jussieu, a celebrated botanist; and America's Benjamin Franklin, who had made a name for himself in the field of electricity. They reported that mesmerism was a delusion, and, most likely, a piece of charlatanry. There was, however, a spirited counter report supported by Dr. Jussieu and the court-physician, d'Eslon. They demanded a careful investigation by the Medical Faculty of the therapeutic effects of the magnetic fluid, but their appeal was neglected. Commenting on the work of this committee and its far-reaching Karmic results, H.P.B. wrote in *Isis* (I, 171):

> It will demonstrate how much ignorance, superficiality, and prejudice can be displayed by a scientific body, when the subject clashes with their own cherished theories. It is the more important because, to the neglect of the committee of the French Academy of 1784 is probably due the present materialistic drift of the public mind; and certainly the gaps in the atomic philosophy which we have seen its most devoted teachers confessing to exist.

A second investigation was undertaken under the auspices of the French Academy in 1825, and although, this time, the committee reported favorably and urged the Academy to continue its researches, this report, too, was ignored. Eighty years after the French investigation of 1784, the "Dialectical Society" of London and some of Eng-

land's greatest scientists made their investigation of mesmeric and allied psychic phenomena. The report of the investigating committee was impressive in recognition of psychic phenomena, but the Dialectical Society rejected it. Thus in all these and other investigations there were minorities who declared the phenomena genuine, urged further inquiry, and were willing to risk their standing in the scientific world for the sake of a chance to discover more of truth. As remarked in *Isis* (I, 177): "There are scientists and *scientists* and if the occult sciences suffer in the instance of modern spiritualism from the malice of one class, nevertheless, they have had their defenders at all times among men whose names have shed lustre upon science itself."

The precedent set by the savants of the French Academy in 1784 was destined to have its most lethal effects exactly one century later. It was in 1884 that the London Society for Psychical Research launched its investigation of phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society. This Society for Psychical Research included in its organization several prominent members of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, such as Prof. F. W. H. Myers, W. Stainton Moses, a well-known Spiritualist, and C. C. Massey. From this it is evident that the S.P.R. already recognized the existence of abnormal phenomena. On May 2, 1884, a Committee was appointed "for the purpose of taking such evidence as to the alleged phenomena of the Theosophical Society as might be offered by members of that body at the time in England, or as could be collected elsewhere." There was a preliminary report in 1884, a final report in 1885—and the conclusion reached by the Committee was that the alleged occult phenomena were due either (*a*) to the deliberate deception of Madame Blavatsky, or (*b*) to spontaneous illusion, or hallucination, or unconscious misrepresentation or invention on the part of the witnesses.

It is not our purpose to treat at length the circumstances surrounding these highly unjust and prejudicial reports. This has been admirably done in Chapter VII of *The Theosophical Movement* (1875-1950). There it becomes clear how easily a presumably scientific body can violate the most elementary rules of fair play, and the spirit of free and honest inquiry.

The fundamental differences between the ordinary scientific motive and that of the Theosophical Movement are pointedly summarized in the following passages from *The Theosophical Movement:*

> But in fact the Committee was that of a rival society whose objects, methods, and purposes were radically different from those proclaimed by H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society for ten years preceding the investigation. The Society for Psychical Research was interested solely in phenomena and was moved by mere scientific curiosity. It specifically disclaimed any interest in philosophical research, any concern in Occult laws, any regard for the moral factor. The Theosophical Society and H.P.B., on the contrary, specifically avowed that the primary Object of its existence was the moral factor of Universal Brotherhood, its second Object the serious study and comparison of religions and philosophies, and its third Object the investigation of *laws* and *powers* as yet unexplained and misunderstood; not phenomena at all, save as these might be incidental and illustrative. (p. 95.)
>
> The "prosecution" of Madame Blavatsky by the Society for Psychical Research was for the crime of nonconformity to the "accepted" methods of the nineteenth century. Science, said the authorities of the day, must maintain complete ethical neutrality. "Facts," they maintained, may be discovered without reference to their moral implications. This element in the theory of scientific method was categorically rejected by H.P.B. who said that the ultimate facts of life are essentially moral in nature, as man is essentially a moral being, and that the quest for truth can never be divorced from the study and practice of natural moral law. She would not submit to the methods of "psychic research" evolved according to the theories of Western science, but demanded that its investigators adopt the principles and method of Occult science. Either he (the Westerner) must acknowledge that his canons of knowledge were inadequate for occult inquiry, and humbly accept the conditions prescribed by H.P.B., or disregard occultism as a subject unworthy of his attention. (pp. 102-103.)

Science and Occultism can never meet so long as the differences set forth in the above passages remain unbridged. In this, there can be no compromise for the Theosophist, if he is aware of the far-reaching karmic consequences to individuals and to humanity of the *limited* scientific method and outlook.

By way of illustration: One of the "consequences" might be considered to be the widespread practice of hypnotism. Had the investigating committees since the French Academy's first inquiry into mesmerism in 1784 faced the "new" psychic phenomena squarely, and had they been receptive to warnings of the dangers in indiscriminate psychic experimentation, then they might have guided the newly awakened forces into safe and proper channels—and had stringent laws enacted against irresponsible dabblers.

ON THE LOOKOUT

Slow Tidal Transition

> Look around you and behold! Think of what you see and hear, and draw therefrom your conclusions. The age of crass materialism, of Soul insanity and blindness, is swiftly passing away. A death struggle between Mysticism and Materialism is no longer at hand, but is already raging. . . . If the signs of the times can be trusted it is not the Animalists who will remain conquerors.—H.P.B.

Theosophists alert to signs of returning cycles will have noted the anticipated mid-century rise in the tide of psychism. We may note, too, the difference between the psychism of today and that of 1850-75. It is as if the *manasic* impetus stemming from the work of H. P. Blavatsky had mixed and mingled with the toppling crest of the nineteenth century phenomenalistic wave, merging with its waters and altering their coloration in marked degree. These changes, which are only now becoming clearly evident to most of us, were anticipated, however, by H.P.B. at least as early as 1888: for she wrote in her First *Message to the American Theosophists:*

> Since the Society was founded, a distinct change has come over the spirit of the age. Those who gave us commission to found the Society foresaw this, now rapidly growing, wave of transcendental influence following that other wave of mere phenomenalism. Even the journals of Spiritualism are gradually eliminating the phenomena and wonders, to replace them with philosophy. The Theosophical Society led the van of this movement. . . .

"Demand" Creates "Supply"

Popular interest in the "psychical powers latent in man" has reached such a peak that it might reasonably be called a minor "tidal wave." It is, at least, of such proportions that even professional "intellectuals" feel impelled to take note of it, each within the framework of his own personal philosophy and according to his particular temperament—as may be seen by considering popular books and articles on this subject. Recently, two contrasting approaches to the subject of psychical research have come to hand: Anthony Flew's equivocal *A New Approach to Psychical Research* (Watts & Co, 1953); and a strong affirmative

article by Aldous Huxley titled "A Case for ESP, PK, and PSI," featured in *Life* (Jan. 11, 1954). A comparative consideration of these two differing treatments of the subject of psychical phenomena reveals interesting configurations in the race-mind—especially at the level of the so-called *intelligentsia.*

The "New Approach"

Mr. Flew, popular BBC commentator, explains that "the novelty of approach claimed in the title consists in the combination of a resolute, yet not invincible, scepticism," together with a semantic analysis of the terminology involved. (We should note in passing, however, that the author's brave "objectivity" seems inoperative when he examines the scanty foundations for the claim that H.P.B.'s phenomena were fraudulent.) Much of Mr. Flew's material regarding mediumistic phenomena, *poltergeists,* etc., is drawn from the annals of the Society for Psychical Research, and its conclusions are certainly accepted uncritically by him in respect to "the exposure of Madame Blavatsky." Thus, he quotes Mr. Hodgson's "most damning report."

> I [Hodgson declared] finally had no doubt whatever that the phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society were part of a huge fraudulent system worked by Madame Blavatsky with the assistance of the Coulombs and several other confederates, and that not a single genuine phenomenon could be found among them all. (*Pro.,* S.P.R., III-210.)

Concerning this report, *The Theosophical Movement* states:

> No opportunity was given the Theosophists to inspect Mr. Hodgson's report, no chance was offered for correction, criticism, objection, or counter-statement, and during the long delay, rumors of the Committee's conclusions were allowed to prejudice public opinion before any evidence had been presented.

A Curious Agreement

Yet it is not without interest that Mr. Flew, out of his logical and "resolute skepticism," and H.P.B., from a rather different basis, make much the same assertion in respect to spiritualist phenomena generally: the "facts" are admitted, but the spiritualist interpretation of those facts is not therefore to be assumed valid. For example, Mr. Flew remarks:

> It seems to the present writer that there is enough mediumistic material produced in adequately guarded circumstances and of such a quality as to require us to postulate *some* paranormal factor. . . . If we had to estimate the evidence for spontaneous mental phenomena by itself we might be justified in giving a negative verdict; if we had to consider the same question with regard to the mediumistic mental phenomena *by themselves,* then it would be rash and probably careless to be similarly complacent. . . . To say this, however, is a very different thing indeed from saying that that paranormal factor is the activity of the disembodied "spirits of the dead."

A Logical Impasse

In no other portion of *A New Approach* does Mr. Flew, evidently extremely reluctant to give ground, so extend himself in polemics as on the "Question of Survival." Self-restricted to the idea that the "person" is obviously inseparable from his body, Mr. Flew finds himself involved in semantic circumlocution:

> If the existence of disembodied people in the sense to be specified is to be a doctrine of survival, is to justify living people ("people" in the old sense) in expecting experiences after death, then it will have to make sense to talk of a disembodied person (new or extended sense of "person") being the same person as some former person (ordinary sense of "person"). And this will demand a change in the meaning of "same person": since a disembodied person, a spirit, cannot be the same person as an (ordinary) person, in the present sense of "same person."

Mr. Flew is right: logic demands a change in *meaning* of the "same person"—a change, however, that materialists are unwilling to consider. As Mr. Crosbie says in *The Friendly Philosopher* (p. 252): "What is it that survives? We survive, as conscious beings, with all the powers of perception, with all that we have ever gained, and thus shall it ever be. There is no cessation for us."

Skepticism

Like other writers of materialistic persuasion (as Mr. Flew puts it, "right thinking people"!), he is peculiarly handicapped in dealing with the question of survival after death. For Mr. Flew considers that "the occurrence of mental imagery without a 'physical basis' in the brain is—as, apart possibly from the facts of psychic research, we have every reason to suppose—*as a matter of fact* impossible." Thus a popular intellectual, with a flip of his finger, disposes of many "facts of psychic research" which might suggest to a more open mind that

mental action apart from a physical brain is psychologic fact. Yet Mr. Flew admits: "The proportion and the degree of significance of positive results reported by different workers in rigorous conditions is now far too great to permit the judgment that the whole business has been a wild goose chase, an exercise in sophisticated superstition."

Why be Disturbed by Facts?

In substance, then, *A New Approach to Psychical Research* says: Here are certain facts occurring with such frequency and inciting so much public interest that we are forced to notice them. But let us see if we cannot explain them away—at least reduce them to mere nuisance-value. However, even in attempting to straddle the fence, Mr. Flew must grant that the fence is there, which is something:

> The whole business is peculiarly baffling: not merely are the ESP phenomena (in all their aspects, telepathic, clairvoyant, and precognitive) the sort of things which right-thinking people feel have no business to happen at all: not merely is it difficult to see even what sort of explanation might be found for them; but results reported by one group of workers often cannot be repeated by others in apparently identical conditions; while what correlations are found between ESP phenomena and other things are weak.
>
> It would be less than honest to pretend—however much one might wish it were true—that anyone has been able to discredit the PK reports in detail. . . .

"The Adventure of Finding Out"

While practically every aspect of psychic phenomena is presented in *A New Approach,* the significance of each is nullified by subtle suggestion. Possibly in order to soft-pedal his negativism, Mr. Flew concludes with these words:

> Throughout this book the treatment of theoretical questions may perhaps have made our approach to psychical research disappointingly negative and unexciting. Negative perhaps. But unexciting? Surely not. For—as Rhine put it in an expression of his own passionate empiricism—"there is ahead of us the adventure of finding out."

A strange "adventure," surely, if one refuses to explore no more than the negative possibilities! And why talk of welcoming *more* evidence if its weight and implications are to be so painstakingly minimized? Yet, to minimize is not to deny, and the fact that a man of Mr. Flew's leanings no longer chooses to deny is the main point.

FIGHTING A CHIMERA

Aldous Huxley, in his "A Case for ESP, PK, and PSI"—featured in *Life*—also suggests that materialistic skeptics are fighting a strenuous though losing battle to avoid acknowledging the existence of a paranormal realm. Yet according to Huxley: "Nowadays, for most people it goes without proving that mental events are caused by physical events, that they are indeed merely aspects of physical events. If this is the case, the incidents recorded in the proceedings of the S.P.R. cannot have taken place and it is only a waste of time to look at the evidence. . . . Psi phenomena do not lend themselves to being physiologized. Therefore they do not exist."

HUXLEY'S OWN APPROACH

The importance of such an article appearing in *Life* lies in the fact that here we encounter a trained, incisive thinker, willing to follow the facts of psychic phenomena wherever they may lead, and to deal with them philosophically in the pages of a mass circulation magazine. Unlike Mr. Flew's book (which is essentially one to be talked *about*), Mr. Huxley's article speaks for itself, and should be perused.

Its importance, however, may be illustrated by a quotation. After recounting two instances of prevision, Mr. Huxley proposes:

> If this hypothesis is correct, we must assume that human beings are endowed, at least potentially, with a paranormal—i.e., besides or beyond the normal—faculty which can manifest itself in a variety of ways—as telepathy, the direct awareness of events taking place in other people's minds; as clairvoyance, the direct awareness, with no help from sense impressions, of events taking place in the outside world; and as precognition, or foreknowledge, the direct awareness, apart from rational forecasting and logical inference, of future events. These are three types of what is called extrasensory perception, or ESP.
>
> But psi is not exclusively a form of knowing. There is some evidence that it is also a form of doing. There may be paranormal ways of action as well as paranormal ways of being aware.

VICISSITUDES OF PARANORMAL INTERPRETATION

"This paranormal world," Mr. Huxley points out, "is new only to modern science. To mankind at large, it is as old as human experience." At first this field was pre-empted by prophets and oracles, then stigmatized by the Roman Church as "in the main diabolic;" it was used by

Swedenborg as the basis for "the whole of his elaborate theology," then appropriated by "the cult of Spiritualism" in the last century. Finally, it was nearly exterminated by the materialism of the early 20th century, only to be re-born into respectable scientific circles under a new name, and, under the aegis of Science, protected from the death-dealing darts of *"Fraudulence."*

Inexcusable Neglect

Mr. Huxley quotes a psychologist, Dr. D. O. Hebb: "Personally, I do not accept ESP for a moment, because it does not make sense. . . . Rhine may still turn out to be right, improbable as I think that is; and my own rejection of his views is—in a literal sense—prejudice." Huxley comments:

> That a man of science should allow prejudice to outweigh evidence seems strange enough. It is even stranger to find a psychologist rejecting a psychological discovery simply because it cannot be explained. Psi is intrinsically no more inexplicable than, say, perception or memory; it is merely less common.

In contrast to Dr. Hebb's attitude, Mr. Huxley quotes "one of the most eminent living philosophers," Dr. C. D. Broad of Cambridge, who, according to Mr. Huxley, has remarked on "the extraordinary indifference of almost all professional philosophers to the subject of psychical research." Dr. Broad has said:

> No excuse is open to philosophers. Their business is to understand the world as a whole and they have no right to ignore any aspect of it. . . . The odd, exceptional, inexplicable facts, however trivial in themselves, are always the point from which the next great and fundamental advances in human knowledge may be made. It is for this reason that I, as a philosopher, attach so much importance to psychical research and deplore the indifference of my colleagues to the subject.

A Stark Future for Man

In contrast to Mr. Flew, who tries to restrain the tidal wave of interest in psychical phenomena, Mr. Huxley considers that the intuitive acceptance of the implications of ESP by great numbers of individuals may prove our ultimate salvation: philosophers cannot too long ignore what the common man accepts. As Mr. Huxley puts it:

> Our philosophy has no place for free will or for anything which might be described as the soul. And yet, with a blessed absence of logic, we go on behaving as though we believe in the uniqueness, the paramount value of human personality. Habit and the fact that our fundamental institutions were framed by men who were firmly convinced of the existence of all the things that "no Behaviorist has ever observed" make it quite easy for us to think one way while acting another, incompatible way. How much longer can we continue to perform this curious feat? One fine day some dangerously logical demagogue may ask us why, if men and women are merely the by-products of physical and social processes, they should not be treated as such. After which we may expect to see the fiction of George Orwell's *1984* turn into appalling fact.

ESP AND SURVIVAL

It is in the approach to the subject of survival after death that the greatest differences are to be noted between the "psychism" of the nineteenth century and the "psychical research" of today. Early Spiritualists displayed an adamantine determination to regard *all* mediumistic phenomena as manifestations of the spirits of the dead, despite every other explanation advanced by H.P.B., whereas modern psychical research falls naturally into categories suggested by her. In Huxley's words:

> Another problem for the psi researchers of the future will be that of human survival after death. If all mental events depend completely on physical events, survival is out of the question. But if there are some mental events that do not depend completely on physical events, survival certainly becomes a possibility.
>
> The recipients of "spirit messages" are often convinced (and, it may be, quite rightly convinced) that they come from personalities known to them on earth, but this conviction is rarely shared by others. Perhaps no evidence of personal identity conveyed through a medium will ever be completely and universally accepted. Even in ordinary life our sense of the personal identity of other human beings is based on hearsay and intuition rather than on scientifically coercive evidence. Disquieting cases of mistaken identity turn up from time to time in the law courts. Mothers accept impostors as their long-lost sons, as in the famous Titchborne case; wives, as in the more recent case of a returned Italian war prisoner, welcome smooth-talking strangers as their husbands. Passports, social security cards and even fingerprints can be faked. And somewhere in the world practically everybody has his or her double. (Stalin and Hitler are said to have employed half a dozen or more.) If it is so difficult, even here and now, to prove scien-

tifically that I am I and you are you, how much harder must it be to demonstrate that the person speaking through the mouth of a medium is in fact the person he says he is, and not a projection of information acquired by means of ESP and dramatized, more or less convincingly, by a dissociated part of the medium's subconscious mind.

For this reason it seems unlikely that future research into the problem of survival will follow the lines laid down by the earlier workers in the field. How it will be conducted I do not pretend to know. We can only work at what lies immediately before us in the hope that new findings may suggest new ways of dealing with old and still unsolved problems.

The Reach of Mind

Mindful that the writings of H. P. Blavatsky contain that *philosophical* explanation whose absence Mr. Huxley deplores, theosophists will doubtless agree that he has unnecessarily restricted his own philosophical research, as evidenced by the following:

> There is as yet no satisfactory philosophical theory about psi. Perhaps William James was on the right track when he suggested that we live immersed, so to speak, in "a continuum of cosmic consciousness," a World Mind, a little of which filters into every particular brain and is experienced by the owner of that brain as his private mind, or consciousness. Henri Bergson went a little further. Mind in itself, he said, is aware of everything, everywhere, without regard to space or time, but the function of our brains is to shut out most of this (to us, irrelevant) knowledge, just in the interests of biological efficiency. On this hypothesis, psi would represent a leakage into personal consciousness of some of the mental material which the brain normally either excludes or directs into utilitarian channels.

Greater Things in Store for Man

It is because Dr. Rhine's rigidly conducted and carefully catalogued experiments afford an excellent basis for philosophical consideration that "Lookout" gives so much space to them. His work seems to be definitely along the lines of the general Theosophical Movement—channeling psychical research into avenues that may profitably be explored. Here, two contrasting approaches to the subject of psychical phenomena by "intellectuals" have been reviewed. Another conclusion (by an eminent physicist, Dr. Pascual Jordan) is worth recalling in this connection (from a discussion in Theosophy 41: 326-328). Having read Dr. Rhine's *The Reach of Mind,* Dr. Jordan reflects:

> It is not rigid skepticism which preserves the integrity of the scientific spirit, but disciplined open-mindedness and an unending quest for profounder relevances than have heretofore been recognized. It seems likely—at any rate, we are convinced that it is so—that a general reconsideration of the psychic factor in human life will be necessary before there can be a fruitful psychology and sociology, and before, indeed, there can be a social movement with genuine promise of the betterment of the world we live in. Man, to better himself, must first learn to honor himself, and while the realities of psychic phenomena are not necessarily uplifting in character, they often suggest the presence of hidden potentialities in human beings. They may, therefore, contribute to a conception of man that will move the heart and mind of man to greater things.

WESTERN ART EVALUATED

Under a title intriguing to Theosophists, *The Voices of Silence,* André Malraux has rewritten, elaborated, and illustrated material formerly published in his *The Psychology of Art.* The *Saturday Review* of Nov. 21, 1953, prints a review of Malraux' book by William Barrett of New York University, and associate editor of *Partisan Review.* Mr. Barrett states that the three careers of Malraux (scholar of art and archeology, brilliant novelist, and heroic man of action in politics and war) have "an inner unity" by which "Malraux realizes himself as the whole and unique individual he is."

RELIGIOUS IDEALS NECESSARY FOR TRUE ART

The synthesis in Malraux of visual imagination, æsthetic appreciation, intellectual comprehension, and morally-motivated action have, says Mr. Barrett, "resulted in a great book"—one which provides the basis for the following summation:

> Most of the art of the past was produced under the inspiration, and sometimes the rule, of religion. If modern man is the heir of all the ages in art what is he going to do with his amazing inheritance? These questions Malraux faces in the fourth and last part of the work, "Aftermath of the Absolute." Since the absolute of religion has waned, the artist now finds an absolute only in his art. The new international culture emerging seems to be that of a fundamentally "agnostic civilization." True, religion survives in our time, and we hear much talk of its revival, but our contemporary art itself is the best indication that this age is not religious: the imitation-Gothic church on a Manhattan side street is dwarfed by skyscrapers. Here, too, Malraux's quick

perception notes a paradox, for it has been precisely modern art itself, in breaking away from the rigid canons of academic painting and sculpture, that has taught us to appreciate the art of distant ages—Babylonian and African sculpture, Byzantine mosaics, primitive painters—namely, just that art that was produced out of the most ardent faith in God, or gods and demons.

True Religion the Root of Inspiration

This idea that the art of a culture is the flowering of an inspiration whose root lies in religion, is consonant with that of H. P. Blavatsky. She suggests further—in her article "Civilization, the Death of Art and Beauty" (THEOSOPHY 31: 342)—that the religion indigenous to a culture lies at the root of its art. In this article, H.P.B. accuses the materialistic science and religion of the West of vitiating the æsthetic standards of older civilizations. Therefore, she says:

> We find hitherto artistic and picturesque Japan succumbing wholly to the temptation of justifying the "ape theory" by *simianizing* its populations in order to bring the country on a level with canting, greedy, and artificial Europe!
>
> For certainly Europe is all this. It is canting and deceitful from its diplomats down to its custodians of religion, from its political down to its social laws, selfish, greedy and brutal beyond expression in its grabbing characteristics. And yet there are those who wonder at the gradual decadence of true art, as if art could exist without imagination, fancy, and a just appreciation of the beautiful in Nature, or without poetry and high religious, hence, metaphysical aspirations!

Man—the Creative Artist

H.P.B. foresaw, then, the predicament that would shortly overtake the modern artist. "Malraux has no solution to this problem of the artist in the modern age," says Mr. Barrett, "beyond the tragic recognition that all art is a rebellion against fate, the mortality of our human condition, as the artist struggles to throw up an image that will brave time and death." Mr. Barrett summarizes:

> Malraux's work ends with a great hymn to man. The final wisdom of a radically humanistic civilization would be the recognition that all of these great images of the past that fill the imaginary museum are the products of man himself, who has created his own gods and demons; and perhaps they may be enough to feed the imagination of future artists.

A PHILOSOPHY OF ART

That there is a Theosophical view of art is intimated strongly in Macneile Dixon's *The Human Situation,* for there the English Platonist and Reincarnationist often discusses the manner in which the fine arts preserve, in symbolic form, profound philosophical intuitions. In the section "The Divine Arts," Dixon says:

> We might think and discourse of the divine arts in many and interesting ways, as, for example, of music and poetry as arts of time, of painting and sculpture as arts of space. But all are music in its Greek and widest sense, the ordered and shapely, the measured, the flowing, the melodious. They are a rhythmical sisterhood. And we are not deceived if we regard each as a species of divination, and the artist as a man feeling his way into reality, attempting, in his own medium and manner, to fathom the inner significance of life's experiences, to penetrate its secret depths, to see things in a wider perspective. In the presence of Turner's or Tintoretto's pictures Ruskin felt as a man might feel in the presence of some supernatural being. . . .
>
> May we not say that the charm of all aesthetic experience consists in this, that it presents the storm in the golden frame of peace? That it reconciles the opposites in the arrest or staying of the flux? Nothing is there denied, nothing denied of the tyrannies and injustices, the frets and fevers, the injurious wrongs that tax the intelligence and freeze the heart. Nothing is denied, all is affirmed. Yet as time with its magic wand deals with the past, so the divine arts with the troubles of the world. They have done their worst, and have no longer any power to harm. They can be remembered and contemplated without the former and accompanying pain.
>
> Thus in poetry and painting, music and sculpture, the necessary and complementary character of Being and Becoming can be in a measure perceived and understood. 'For nothing,' as Plato thought, 'can have any sense except by reason of that of which it is the shadow.' And here the opposites meet. None can deny that there is within us an activity only to be satisfied in the realm of Becoming, in reaching out to more than we already are. Nor can it be denied, such is the nature of the human soul, that it shares in the pulsations of the universe. its alternating periods of withdrawal and renewal, of action and repose. For refreshment, for the harvesting of its toils, it demands a seasonal ascent into Being. And since in the arts it perceives dimly and through a veil the attunement of the opposites, it judges the harvest worth the pains, finding the world, in Plutarch's phrase, 'more good than bad,' as Plato argued and Aristotle, too, agreed.